

Message Text

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20

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3309

INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: MILI, TH, US

SUBJ: U.S. MILITARY FORCE LEVELS IN THAILAND

REF: SECDEF 132304Z SEP 76

1. EMBASSY IS VERY MUCH CONCERNED TO NOTE THAT IN THE FACT SHEET ON U.S. MILITARY STRENGTH OUTSIDE THE U.S., DISTRIBUTED TO JOURNALISTS AT THE PENTAGON SEPT. 13 (REFTEL), STRENGTH LEVELS FOR THAILAND ARE SERIOUSLY IN ERROR. ACCORDING TO FACT SHEET, THERE ARE 800 U.S. ARMY AND 400 USAF PERSONNEL THAILAND, FOR A TOTAL U.S. MILITARY STRENGTH LEVEL OF 1200. IN FACT AS OF SEPT. 10 THERE WERE A TOTAL OF 223 U.S. MILITARY IN THAILAND IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES: 114 ARMY, 65 USAF, 22 USN, 23 USMC.

2. AS THE DEPT. IS AWARE, ALL U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THAILAND, OTHER THAN THOSE ASSIGNED TO JUSMAG, THE DAO, THE MARINE GUARD DETACHMENT, SEATO MEDICAL LAB, AND A FEW MISCELLANEOUS CATEGORIES, WERE WITHDRAWN BY JUL 20, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUEST OF THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT. THE RTG AND THE THAI MEDIA HAVE ACCEPTED OUR ASSURANCES THAT THIS WITHDRAWAL

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HAS BEEN COMPLETED. THE PENTAGON FACT SHEET ISSUED

SEPT. 13 THREATENS TO OPEN UP THIS WHOLE MATTER
AGAIN, IN A MANNER WHICH MAY CONSIDERABLY DAMAGE THE
CREDIBILITY OF THIS MISSION AND ITS RELATIONS WITH
THE RTG.

3. ISSUING A CORRECTED FACT SHEET AT THIS POINT WOULD,
IN OUR VIEW, DRAW UNWANTED ATTENTION TO THIS SUBJECT.
IF QUERIED HERE, WE INTEND TO RESPOND BY SAYING FACT
SHEET IS IN ERROR AND PROVIDE FIGURES IN PARA ONE
ABOVE. SUGGEST WASHINGTON DO THE SAME AND THAT
WHEN FACT SHEET IS NEXT CIRCULATED, IT CONTAIN CORRECT
TOTALS, WHICH JUSMAG REPORTS ON A WEEKLY BASIS TO
THE PENTAGON.
BURKE

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